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Hayal Pozanti Conjures New Worlds in First Vermont Solo Exhibition

The World Sang Through Me Opens Nov. 14 at BMAC

IMAGES
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BRATTLEBORO, VT— Six years after moving to Vermont, Turkish-born artist Hayal Pozanti is bringing the extraordinary world of color and form inspired by her adopted home to the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (BMAC). *Hayal Pozanti: The World Sang Through Me*, Pozanti's first solo exhibition in the state, opens Saturday, November 14, 2026, and remains on view through February 14, 2027.

Curated by BMAC Director of Exhibitions Sarah Freeman, the exhibition brings together paintings, studies, and sculptural seating in the museum's expansive Wolf Kahn & Emily Mason Gallery. Several works have never been exhibited before, including a new painting measuring 10 feet across.

Pozanti's paintings are filled with rich, luminous colors and fluid, overlapping forms that seem to pulse and move across the canvas. Some suggest unfurling flower petals, leaves, flowing water, or unfamiliar living creatures. Others resist easy identification, inviting viewers to imagine worlds of their own. Rather than depicting recognizable landscapes, Pozanti seeks to capture the sensations and emotions of being immersed in nature.

For Pozanti, whose first name means "daydream" in Turkish, these imagined worlds are more than flights of fancy. "Dreams are not merely fanciful illusions. They are potent forces that can shape reality," she said. "I don't want to simply critique the world, I would like to imagine a better one. And through painting, I try to bring that world into being."

"Standing in front of Hayal's paintings is exhilarating," said Freeman. "The colors, the movement, the sheer scale of them—they draw you into a world that feels both familiar and completely new. There's something joyfully defiant about them. At a time when it can be hard to feel hopeful about the future, these paintings offer something powerful: a sense that other possibilities are still within our reach."

The paintings reflect a remarkable evolution in Pozanti's artistic practice. As a graduate student at Yale University, Pozanti developed a visual language of 31 invented symbols as she sought to move beyond the digital imagery and information that had dominated her earlier work. Over time, her carefully structured abstract compositions gave way to softer, more organic forms. That transformation accelerated after she moved from Los Angeles to Vermont in 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Surrounded by mountains, forests, and gardens, Pozanti began spending more time outdoors, making small oil pastel studies of the plants and landscapes around her. Back in her studio, those observations became starting points for large-scale paintings in which the natural world is reimagined through her distinctive visual language.

Pozanti's painting process is highly tactile. She paints using her fingertips rather than brushes. Working with oil sticks, she applies pigment directly to the canvas, blending and smoothing colors using only her hands. In a poem titled "My Fingers," which is included in the exhibition, she describes paint staining her hands, face, and clothing, and the experience of becoming "possessed by color." The poem concludes: "To create a world / And get completely lost in it."

Pozanti's hands-on, intuitive approach is also a response to the increasing prevalence of artificial intelligence. "AI has made me think more deeply about what makes human creativity different," Pozanti said. "We experience and understand our surroundings through our senses, not just information. I immerse myself in the sights, smells, sounds, and textures of the natural world, then use my hands—my fingers—to make large-scale paintings, feeling both the possibilities and the limits of my own body as I work."

Her garden has become a particular source of inspiration. "It sings to me," she said, "and gifts me all the colors and shapes that appear in my paintings."

Pozanti's attachment to Vermont extends beyond its natural beauty. She has described her new home as "the first place I've felt community and belonging so tenderly and genuinely… There isn't a day that goes by when I don't say, 'I can't believe I live here'."

Born in Istanbul, Turkey, in 1983, Pozanti earned her MFA from Yale in 2011 and has exhibited internationally. In 2021, she completed "Instant Paradise," an 85-foot-long permanent installation on the ceiling of the New York Public Library's Stavros Niarchos Foundation Library in Manhattan. She is represented by Jessica Silverman and Timothy Taylor.

The World Sang Through Me opens alongside five other new BMAC exhibitions on Saturday, November 14. An opening party with Pozanti and the other exhibiting artists will take place that evening at 5 p.m. The following afternoon—Sunday, November 15, at 4 p.m.—Pozanti and Freeman will discuss the exhibition in the Wolf Kahn & Emily Mason Gallery. Both events are free and open to all.

Other related programming includes "A Feast for the Senses: Dinner Inspired by Hayal Pozanti," on Saturday, January 9, 2027, at 6 p.m., and "Immigrant Artists in Vermont," a two-day symposium on February 6-7, 2027. Presented with support from the Vilcek Foundation, the symposium will explore the contributions of immigrant artists to Vermont's cultural life, past and present. Details about both events will be available soon at brattleboromuseum.org.

All works in *The World Sang Through Me* are on loan from Pozanti and private collectors. Funding is provided by Christopher and Vimala Steadman, the Vilcek Foundation, and the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation.

The Brattleboro Museum & Art Center presents rotating exhibitions of contemporary art, complemented by lectures, artist talks, film screenings, and other public programs. BMAC is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10-4. Admission is "pay as you wish." Located in historic Union Station in downtown Brattleboro, at the intersection of Main Street and Routes 119 and 142, the museum is wheelchair accessible, with the exception of one gallery. For more information and accessibility requests, visit brattleboromuseum.org, call 802-257-0124, or email office@brattleboromuseum.org.

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